

ADDITIONS TO THE KNOWN AVIFAUNA OF THE IMPENETRABLE (BWINDI) FOREST, SOUTH WESTERN UGANDA

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The Impenetrable (Bwindi) Forest Reserve (321 km²) in the extreme south west of Uganda holds one of the richest forest avifaunas in Africa (Keith *et al.* 1969, Friedmann & Williams 1970), including a particularly important montane avifauna (Keith 1980, Prigogine 1985). This is apparently because of its considerable altitudinal range (1160–2600 m) and probable role as a Pleistocene refuge (Keith 1980, Hamilton 1981).

The most significant accounts of the avifauna of the Impenetrable Forest are those of Keith *et al.* (1969), Friedmann & Williams (1970) and Keith (1980). Butynski (1984) provides a detailed description of the Impenetrable and reviews the scientific literature concerned with this forest.

During 1983–84 we made several one- to two-week trips to the forest to collect information on its conservation status. From August 1986 to the present (early 1989) we have undertaken a variety of conservation and research activities in and around the forest. Although our work has not focussed on the birds, we have made opportunistic observations. In particular, we have added a number of species to the bird list. All additions are based on sightings or calls. No mist netting or collecting of birds was undertaken. The species added are, however, all relatively easy to identify with certainty even when not in the hand.

We have added 29 species to the list of birds known to occur within the borders of the Impenetrable Forest Reserve. Of these, three are true forest species while several others are, in this part of Uganda, generally associated with forest or forest edge. Prior to our work, the bird check-list for the Impenetrable consisted of 286 species (Keith *et al.* 1969, Friedmann & Williams 1970, Britton 1980), 177 of which are forest species (Keith 1980, Britton 1980). The 29 species listed below bring the check-list to 315, 180 of which are forest species.

NOTES ON SPECIES

The species' number, sequence and nomenclature follow Britton (1980). An asterisk after the species number denotes what we consider to be forest birds in this locality.

- 27 *Ardea melanocephala* Black-headed Heron Immature on compound of Ruhizha rest house, 2300 m; seen several times in Nov 1986.
- 42 *Scopus umbretta* Hamerkop One on dirt road, Ruhizha, 2300 m, 28 Oct 1987 and a pair nesting just outside the forest near Ruhizha, 2100 m.
- 96 *Polyboroides radiatus* Harrier Hawk Seen many times. Surprising that this bird was not on earlier lists as it is one of the more common raptors, especially from 1500–2400 m. Pair nesting, Ruhizha, 2300 m, 1988.
- 122 *Buteo buteo* Common Buzzard One, Ruhizha, 2300 m, 20 Mar 1988 and 5 Feb 1989.
- 126 *Hieraetus dubius* Ayres' Hawk Eagle One adult and one immature, Kyaguliro, 2300 m, 27 Dec 1987.

- 134 *Polemaetus bellicosus* **Martial Eagle** Adult flew over Ruhizha rest house, 2300 m, 19 Nov 1986.
- 138 *Milvus migrans* **Black Kite** Common passage migrant over the forest at Ruhizha, 2300 m. Flocks usually of 10–100 birds, but sometimes over 200. Flying south and south-west May–October, especially in August.
- 152 *Falco cuvieri* **African Hobby** One, Ishasha Hill, 1600 m, 11 Apr 1983. Four Ruhizha, 2300 m, 10 Nov 1988, feeding on flying termites. Two Ruhizha, 25 Dec 1988.
- 158 *Falco peregrinus* **Peregrine Falcon** One, Ruhizha, 2300 m, 10 Nov 1988, feeding on flying termites and one there, 18 Dec 1988 harassing a White-necked Raven *Corvus albicollis*.
- 194 *Balearica pavonina* **Crowned Crane** Heard and seen on many occasions on forest edge, Ruhizha, 2300 m, and near Kayonza, 1500 m.
- *211 *Sarothrura elegans* **Buff-spotted Pygmy Crake** Heard, Buhoma, 1500 m, 3–9 Feb 1984 and on several occasions, Ruhizha, 2300 m, Sep 1987.
- 256 *Tringa glareola* **Wood Sandpiper** One seen twice, Mubwindi Swamp, 2150 m, 22 Mar 1988 and again, 19 Sep 1988.
- 368 *Poicephalus robustus* **Brown-necked Parrot** Seen on several hundred occasions, Ruhizha, 2300 m, and other places over the forest. Very surprising that this species is not on previous lists. It seems likely that the records of Red-fronted Parrots *P. gulielmi* given by Mann (1972), Britton (1980), Bennun (1986) and Fry *et al.* (1988) were, in fact, *P. robustus*. *P. robustus* is apparently much more common today than during the 1960s when most avifaunal work was conducted in the Impenetrable. According to Britton (1980), a party of three *P. robustus* (one collected) at Kanungu in 1940 is the only record for Uganda. Kanungu lies 10 km north of the Impenetrable. Roger Wilson (pers. comm.) reports that *P. robustus* is frequently seen on the Virunga Volcanoes and is the only parrot there. The Virungas lie only 15 km from the Impenetrable. We contend that there are no good records of *P. gulielmi* for Uganda west of Mt Elgon. The Impenetrable Forest/Kanungu area may represent the northern limit of *P. robustus* in eastern and central Africa.
- *371 *Psittacus erithacus* **Grey Parrot** Pairs seen twice, Kitahuria, 1600 m, 17 Feb 1983, Kyaguliro, three at 2200 m and one at 2250 m, 21 Jan 1989, and four at 2300 m, 3 Feb 1989. Thus 2300 m appears to be the upper limit for the species, 100 m higher than noted by Britton (1980).
- 395 *Cuculus canorus* **Eurasian Cuckoo** One, Kyaguliro, 23 Mar 1988, 2300 m—600 m higher than reported as usual for this species by Britton (1980).
- 404 *Centropus monachus* **Blue-headed Coucal** One seen, two heard, Mubwindi Swamp, 2150 m, 2 Feb 1989.
- 441 *Macrodipteryx vexillarius* **Pennant-winged Nightjar** One, Ruhizha, 2300 m, 30 Jul 1987 and several times during the June to August 1988 dry season.
- 480 *Merops apiaster* **Eurasian Bee-eater** Flocks of 25–30 birds, Ruhizha, 2300 m, 11 and 27 Sep 1986, 11 Sep 1987 and 25 Sep 1988.

- 590 *Mesopicos goertae* Grey Woodpecker All sightings at Ruhizha, 2300 m. One, 12 Oct 1986, pair 18 Nov 1987. All in forest but within 400 m of its edge. Possibly only seasonally in the Impenetrable. All more than 300 m higher than reported by Britton (1980).
- 623 *Delichon urbica* House Martin Flocks of 100–200 catching flying termites, Ruhizha, 2300 m, 1 May 1988.
- *645 *Dicrurus ludwigii* Square-tailed Drongo One, Ruhizha, 2200 m, 14 Aug 1987; 300 m higher than reported by Britton (1980).
- 688 *Campephaga flava* Black Cuckoo Shrike A male and female, Buhoma, 1550 m, 7 Feb 1984.
- 837 *Camaroptera brachyura* Grey-backed Camaroptera One, Buhoma, 1500 m, 10 Apr 1984 and one (seen by John Miskell, pers. comm.), Ruhizha, 2300 m, just outside forest edge, 17 Nov 1988. Britton (1980) gives the altitudinal limit as 2200 m.
- 994 *Motacilla cinerea* Grey Wagtail One, Mubwindi Swamp, 2150 m, 2 Feb 1989.
- 996 *Motacilla flava* Yellow Wagtail Solitary individuals seen twice on dirt road, Ruhizha, 2300 m, late Oct 1986 and 17 Jan 1988.
- 1030 *Lanius collurio* Red-backed Shrike One, Ruhizha, 2300 m, 5 Nov 1986.
- 1061 *Lamprotornis splendidus* Splendid Glossy Starling Flock, Kayonza, 1500 m, 10 Apr 1983.
- 1273 *Emberiza flaviventris* Golden-breasted Bunting One, Ruhizha, 8 Nov 1986, 2300 m, 100 m higher than reported by Britton (1980).
- In addition to the above, we have probable sightings of the following species:
- [*711 *Chlorocichla laetissima* Joyful Greenbul Several, Kitahurira, 1600 m, 17 Feb 1983.
- Two species were observed just outside the edge of the Impenetrable and will probably eventually be found within its boundary:
- 160 *Falco subbuteo* Hobby Two, Kagoote Hill, 1700 m, 5 Feb 1984.
- 575 *Jynx ruficollis* Red-throated Wryneck One, Buoma, 1700 m, 1 Jul 1984.

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